

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 311673 TOSEC 340052

LIMDIS

FOLLOWING SEOUL 10207 SENT ACTION SECSTATE DEC 28; REPEATED
TO YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 10207

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINT KS US

SUBJ: ROK STATEMENTS ON KIM SANG-KUN AND BUGGING ALLEGATIONS
ISSUES

1. WE ARE FORWARDING BY SEPTELS TEXT OF FOREIGN MINISTRY
STATEMENT, BACKGROUND STATEMENT ISSUED TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
PEACEFUL UNIFICATION COUNCIL AND PRESS AND STATEMENT OF
UNIFICATION COUNCIL REGARDING KIN SANG-KUN AND BUGGING
ALLEGATION ISSUES. GOVERNMENT STATEMENTS INTENDED TO PROVIDE
BACKGROUND ON ROKG POSITION FOR PRESS AND PUBLIC ON THE
ISSUES.

2. AS CAN BE SEEN FROM STATEMENTS AND AS WE ANTICIPATED,
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ROKG COVERED WHOLE SPECTRUM OF REACTIONS FROM EFFORT TO
STRESS CONTINUATION OF FRIENDLY KOREAN-US RELATIONS TO HARD
BITTER ATTACK ON USG, PARTICULARLY FOR HANDLING KIM SANG-KUN
CASE. CONTRAST BETWEEN FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT, WHICH
IN KOREAN PERSPECTIVE IS RELATIVELY RESTRAINED, AND BACKGROUND
PAPER, WHICH WE SUSPECT HAS MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND

PROBABLY KCIA ORIGINS, IS MUCH TOUGHER NOT ONLY IN TONE BUT IN SO-CALLED FACTUAL CONTENT. BACKGROUND PAPER IS STRIDENTLY SELF-SERVING CFORT TO PUT U.S. IN POOR LIGHT, WHILE FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT MAKES AN EFFORT AT BALANCE AND TRYING TO CLOSE BOTH CASES.

3. INITIAL PRESS REACTION WILL BE REPORTED SEPTTEL, BUT FOR DAY OR SO WE PROBABLY WILL NOT GET FULL RECKONING. WE SERIOUSLY DOUBT WHETHER, IN KOREAN EYES, ISSUES CAN BE CLOSED, AS FOREIGN MINISTER HOPES, IN VIEW OF BACK-GROUND STATEMENT. BUT OUTCOME DEPENDS HEAVILY ON GUIDANCE GIVEN THE PRESS ONCE INITIAL PHASE OF SELF-JUSTIFICATION HAS RUN ITS COURSE.

4. IN ADDITION TO PRESS GUIDANCE ALREADY DEVELOPED, WE SUGGEST AGAIN THAT WE MAKE CLEAR CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING KIM SANG-KUN CASE DERIVED ENTIRELY FROM HIS DESIRES AND THAT, WHILE USG RECOGNIZES DESIRABILITY OF HIS SEEING ROK REPRESENTATIVE, IT NOT IN POSITION TO DICTATE TO HIM CIRCUMSTANCES OF SUCH A MEETING. REITERATION OF USG POSITION ON MAINTENANCE OF RELATIONSHIP DESPITE THESE ISSUES IS ALSO SUGGESTED. FOR THE PRESENT WE WOULD FINALLY SUGGEST LETTING REMAINDER OF FLAK TOSSED UP AT US BE UNANSWERED IF POSSIBLE.

5. DEPENDING UPON PRESS PLAY IN TOMORROW MORNING'S PAPER, I WILL REGISTER UNHAPPINESS WITH BACKGROUND STATEMENT TO FOREIGN MINISTER. LOWER LEVEL PROTEST TO FOREIGN MINISTRY BEING MADE TODAY. SNEIDER UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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